

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

Pisa, the others were either men of small note or appointed for political reasons; they included Pileo da Prata, Archbishop of Ravenna, Agapito Colonna, and Philippe de Alen[^]on, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, a kinsman of the King of France. The Bishop of London, William Courtenay, was among those who declined the papal offer. On October 4, Catherine wrote to Monna Agnese, the wife of the Florentine tailor, tenderly forbidding her to practise excessive and imprudent austerities ^j¹ and, on October 5, to Pope Urban again, the news of Clement's election having reached her : " with the desire of seeing you robed in the strong garment of most ardent charity, in order that the blows that are hurled at you by the wicked men of the world, lovers of themselves, may not be able to harm you." In the strength of this garment, let him fearlessly enter the battle against the Antichrist that the incarnate demons have raised up against him.² She wrote, on October 8, to the Queen of Naples, imploring her not to pervert the light into darkness by aiding the cardinals or acknowledging their Antipope; let her, at least, remain neutral until the truth is made manifest to her.⁸ A letter to the tailor Francesco and his wife, a letter of spiritual comfort and exhortation, dated October 13, has a peculiarly interesting postscript: " I pray you to take at once to Giannozzo the letter that I send you with this, and do not fail to take it to him wherever he is."⁴ Here we find Catherine in direct communication with Giannozzo Sacchetti, and, in the light of his tragic fate in the following year, it would have been of very great, even painful interest, to know what was the subject of the Saint's letter to him. A letter to a Florentine lady, on the patient reception of tribulations, with what seems a reference to the harsh judgments passed upon her own mission to Florence, is of October 20.^B On October 23,

¹ Bibl. Nazionale di Firenze, MS. xxxvii. 130.

² Letter 306 (18). « Letter 312 (315).

⁴ Bibl. Nazionale di Firenze, MS. *cit.*

⁶ Letter 307 (368). In several MSS. it is dated "a di xx d'Octobre a Firenze, 1378," the address having got confused with the text. Catherine was at Siena and her correspondent at Florence.